



PETERSHAM

Worcester County



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NARRATIVE

Narrative

The Town of Petersham, in its third century, having been incorporated in April of 1754, is located at the northeastern part of the Quabbin Reservoir. The town, which ranks third in the Commonwealth in size, is easily reached from both Route 2 and the Massachusetts Turnpike. The elegant town common is the centerpiece of the Petersham Historic District, listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Some 45 buildings, mostly built in the early nineteenth century are included in the district. Many of Petersham's 1200 residents live near the village center, the remainder being scattered throughout the town in an assortment of country dwellings, new and old. Aside from its attractiveness, Petersham is blessed with a varied population desiring both to preserve and enjoy the beauty around them.

An outstanding feature of Petersham is its wealth of conservation land, including not only the thousands of acres of the MDC's Quabbin Reservation, but also a number of large tracts maintained by the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, the Harvard Forest, the Audubon Society and the Trustees of Reservations. As a result, the sighting of bald eagles, white-tailed deer, wild turkeys, raccoons and many other forms of wildlife is common. Cultural and recreational facilities in Petersham are many and varied, including the Petersham Craft Center, the Historical Society with its museum, the Memorial Library, Petersham Country Club, Curling Club, the Fisher Museum at Harvard Forest, summer band concerts staged at the renovated band stand, impressive Memorial Day ceremonies, numerous hiking and skiing trails, the Petersham Gun Club, Elizabeth Carpenter Concerts, antique show and other events sponsored by the American Legion, Grange, Lions Club and the three churches.

(Narrative supplied by community)



GEOGRAPHY

Location

West central Massachusetts, bordered by Phillipston on the northeast; Barre on the southeast; Harwick, Ware, and Quabbin Reservoir on the south; New Salem and Quabbin Reservoir on the west; and Athol on the northwest. Petersham is 24 miles southwest of Fitchburg, 69 miles west of Boston, and 178 miles from New York City.

Total Area: 68.31 sq. miles

Land Area: 54.24 sq. miles

Population: 1,131

Density: 21 per sq. mile

Climate

(National Climatic Data Center)

(Tully Lake Station)

Normal temperature in January.....18.8°F

Normal temperature in July.....69.3°F

Normal annual precipitation.....43.1"

U.S.G.S. Topographical Plates

Petersham, Athol, Quabbin Reservoir, Barre, Orange, Winsor Dam

Regional Planning Agency

Montachusett

Metropolitan Statistical Area

(1993 Definition)



GOVERNMENT

Municipal Offices

Main Number: (508) 724-3353

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Form of Government

Board of Selectmen

Open Town Meeting

Year Incorporated

As a town: 1754

Registered Voters (Secretary of State 1994)

Number	%
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Total Registered 845

Democrats 101 12.0 % Republicans 133 15.7 % Other parties 0 0.0 % Unenrolled Voters 611 72.3 %

Legislators

[Senators and Representatives by City and Town](#)



DEMOGRAPHICS

Table DP-1. Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000

Geographic Area: Petersham town, Worcester County, Massachusetts

[For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, and definitions, see text]

Subject	Number	Percent	Subject	Number	Percent
Total population.....	1,180	100.0	HISPANIC OR LATINO AND RACE		
SEX AND AGE			Total population.....	1,180	100.0
Male.....	594	50.3	Hispanic or Latino (of any race).....	13	1.1
Female.....	586	49.7	Mexican.....	4	0.3
Under 5 years.....	60	5.1	Puerto Rican.....	3	0.3
5 to 9 years.....	72	6.1	Cuban.....	-	-
10 to 14 years.....	82	6.9	Other Hispanic or Latino.....	6	0.5
15 to 19 years.....	65	5.5	Not Hispanic or Latino.....	1,167	98.9
20 to 24 years.....	36	3.1	White alone.....	1,139	96.5
25 to 34 years.....	108	9.2	RELATIONSHIP		
35 to 44 years.....	211	17.9	Total population.....	1,180	100.0
45 to 54 years.....	221	18.7	In households.....	1,087	92.1
55 to 59 years.....	66	5.6	Householder.....	438	37.1
60 to 64 years.....	52	4.4	Spouse.....	261	22.1
65 to 74 years.....	108	9.2	Child.....	314	26.6
75 to 84 years.....	71	6.0	Own child under 18 years.....	246	20.8
85 years and over.....	28	2.4	Other relatives.....	35	3.0
Median age (years).....	43.2	(X)	Under 18 years.....	13	1.1
18 years and over.....	916	77.6	Nonrelatives.....	39	3.3
Male.....	448	38.0	Unmarried partner.....	22	1.9
Female.....	468	39.7	In group quarters.....	93	7.9
21 years and over.....	897	76.0	Institutionalized population.....	-	-
62 years and over.....	236	20.0	Noninstitutionalized population.....	93	7.9
65 years and over.....	207	17.5	HOUSEHOLD BY TYPE		
Male.....	82	6.9	Total households.....	438	100.0
Female.....	125	10.6	Family households (families).....	299	68.3
RACE			With own children under 18 years.....	129	29.5
One race.....	1,168	99.0	Married-couple family.....	261	59.6
White.....	1,147	97.2	With own children under 18 years.....	112	25.6
Black or African American.....	8	0.7	Female householder, no husband present.....	24	5.5
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	9	0.8	With own children under 18 years.....	12	2.7
Asian.....	3	0.3	Nonfamily households.....	139	31.7
Asian Indian.....	-	-	Householder living alone.....	119	27.2
Chinese.....	2	0.2	Householder 65 years and over.....	50	11.4
Filipino.....	1	0.1	Households with individuals under 18 years.....	137	31.3
Japanese.....	-	-	Households with individuals 65 years and over.....	118	26.9
Korean.....	-	-	Average household size.....	2.48	(X)
Vietnamese.....	-	-	Average family size.....	3.04	(X)
Other Asian ¹	-	-	HOUSING OCCUPANCY		
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	-	-	Total housing units.....	474	100.0
Native Hawaiian.....	-	-	Occupied housing units.....	438	92.4
Guamanian or Chamorro.....	-	-	Vacant housing units.....	36	7.6
Samoa.....	-	-	For seasonal, recreational, or		
Other Pacific Islander ²	-	-	occasional use.....	21	4.4
Some other race.....	1	0.1	Homeowner vacancy rate (percent).....	0.8	(X)
Two or more races.....	12	1.0	Rental vacancy rate (percent).....	2.6	(X)
Race alone or in combination with one			HOUSING TENURE		
or more other races: ³			Occupied housing units.....	438	100.0
White.....	1,158	98.1	Owner-occupied housing units.....	362	82.6
Black or African American.....	10	0.8	Renter-occupied housing units.....	76	17.4
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	20	1.7	Average household size of owner-occupied units.....	2.57	(X)
Asian.....	4	0.3	Average household size of renter-occupied units.....	2.08	(X)
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	-	-			
Some other race.....	1	0.1			

- Represents zero or rounds to zero. (X) Not applicable.

¹ Other Asian alone, or two or more Asian categories.

² Other Pacific Islander alone, or two or more Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander categories.

³ In combination with one or more of the other races listed. The six numbers may add to more than the total population and the six percentages may add to more than 100 percent because individuals may report more than one race.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.



HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Home Sales (Banker & Tradesman) -

[Town Stats - Free market Statistics](#)

Subsidized Housing Units (DHCD 1998)

[DHCD Subsidized Housing Inventory](#)

Subsidized Housing Units: The number of housing units which count toward the municipality's 10% goal for low- and moderate-income housing. It includes both subsidized affordable units and market rate units in certain eligible subsidized developments.

Public Housing Units (DHCD 1999)

Conventional State: 0
Conventional Federal: 0

Rental Assistance(DHCD 1999)

State (MRVP: 0
Federal (Section 8): 0



TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION AND ACCESS

The principal highway of northern Worcester county is State Route 2, the old Mohawk Trail, which runs across northern Massachusetts. State Route 140 and Interstate 190 connect the region to Worcester. The Springfield Terminal Railway Line (the former Boston and Maine Railroad) parallels Route 2 and provides access to the network of intermodal facilities serving central and eastern Massachusetts.

Major Highways

Principal highways are State Route 32, which runs N-S across central Massachusetts, State Route 101 providing a link in Templeton to Route 2, and State Route 122.

Rail

There is no passenger or freight rail service in Petersham, but the network of intermodal facilities serving Massachusetts is easily accessible.

Bus

Petersham is a member of the Franklin Regional Transit Authority (FRTA), which provides paratransit services for the elderly and disabled through the Council on Aging.

Other

The Orange Municipal Airport, a General Aviation (GA) facility, is easily accessible. It has 2 asphalt runways 5,000'x 150' and 4,998'x 150'. Instrument approaches available: Non-precision.



CULTURE AND RECREATION

LIBRARIES

[Board of Library Commissioners On-line Library Catalog](#)

(American Association of Museums)

Fisher Museum of Forestry

Athol Road

(508) 724-3302

Petersham Historical Society

N. Main Street

(617) 724-3380

MUSEUMS

RECREATION

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Recreational Facilities (Recreational sites and activities)

[Department of Environmental Management Recreation Section](#)



MISCELLANEOUS

HEALTH FACILITIES

(Dept. of Public Health 1992)

Hospitals

None

Long Term Care

None

Hospices

None

Rest Homes

None

UTILITIES

[Telephone Numbers for Public Utilities](#)

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NOTE: The COMMUNITY PROFILE draws information from a diversity of sources. The main source of information is listed under each section. In some instances comments submitted by the municipality were incorporated to correct and/or enhance the information obtained from the main source. However, no changes were made to those data bases which must be consistent throughout the state. DHCD has made efforts to ensure the accuracy of all data in the COMMUNITY PROFILES, but cannot take responsibility for any consequences arising from the use of the information contained in this document.